IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-25, in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for defining a management policy for controlling behavior of a management system, said method comprising ~~the steps of~~:

executing a program on a processor-based device that presents a user interface for defining said management policy;

receiving input from a user identifying management action to be performed by said management policy; and

receiving input from a user specifying a <u>modifiable</u> process flow for said management policy to utilize in performing said management action.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein said management action to be performed by said management policy comprises an action for managing at least one network element of a communication network.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein said management policy is invoked for performing said management action responsive to detection of a fault condition for at least one network element managed by said management system.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 3, wherein said management policy identifies said fault condition and said at least one network element for which said management action is to be invoked.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein said management policy is represented by a software object stored to a data storage device communicatively accessible by said management system.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) <u>A method for defining a management policy for controlling behavior of a management system, said method comprising:</u>

<u>executing a program on a processor-based device that presents a user interface for defining said management policy;</u>

<u>receiving input from a user identifying management action to be performed by said management policy; and</u>

<u>receiving input from a user specifying a process flow for said management policy to utilize in performing said management action,</u> ~~The method of claim 1~~ wherein said management action includes at least one type of action selected from ~~the~~ <u>a</u> group consisting of~~:~~ fault correlation, thresholding, logging information related to a fault, alert generation for a fault, suppression of an alert, escalation of an alert, and any combination thereof.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 6<u>,</u> wherein said process flow identifies an order of execution of actions included in said management action.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim <u>1</u>~~1,~~ wherein said defining said management policy includes creating a new management policy.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim <u>1</u>~~,1~~ wherein said defining said management policy includes modifying an existing management policy.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1<u>,</u> wherein ~~said steps of~~<u>the</u> receiving <u>of</u> input<u>s</u> from a user <u>each</u> further comprise ~~the step of:~~ receiving input from a user for arranging at least one action to be performed for said management action in a process list to specify said process flow.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 1<u>,</u> further comprising ~~the step of:~~ storing said management action to a software object defining said management policy.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method of claim 11<u>,</u> wherein said storing ~~step~~ further comprises~~:~~ storing said management action to a process list attribute of said software object, wherein said process list attribute identifies said process flow for said management policy.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A management system comprising:

software program stored to a data storage device, said software program executable to present a user interface for defining a management policy for controlling behavior of said management system;

at least one processor-based device operable to execute said software program; and

at least one input device communicatively coupled to said at least one processor-based device to allow input from a user to said software program to identify management action to be performed by said management policy and to specify a modifiable process flow for said management policy to utilize in performing said management action.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system of claim 13, further comprising at least one processor-based device operable to execute said management policy to control behavior of said management system in managing at least one network element of a communication network.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system of claim 13, wherein said data storage device comprises at least one storage device selected from the a group consisting of: random access memory (RAM), disk drive, floppy disk, Compact Disc (CD), Digital Versatile Disc (DVD), any other type of optical storage medium, and any combination thereof.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system of claim 13, wherein said management policy is represented by a software object stored to a data storage device communicatively accessible by said management system.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A management system comprising:

software program stored to a data storage device, said software program executable to present a user interface for defining a management policy for controlling behavior of said management system;

at least one processor-based device operable to execute said software program; and

at least one input device communicatively coupled to said at least one processor-based device to allow input from a user to said software program to identify management action to be performed by said management policy and to specify a process flow for said management policy to utilize in performing said management action. The system of claim 13 wherein said management action includes at least one type of action selected from the

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group consisting of: fault correlation, thresholding, logging information related to a fault, alert generation for a fault, suppression of an alert, escalation of an alert, and any combination thereof.

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system of claim 17, wherein said process flow identifies an order of execution of actions included in said management action.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system of claim 13, wherein said software program is operable to receive said input from a user comprising input for arranging at least one action to be performed for said management action in an order that specifies said process flow.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A medium comprising a software object defining a management policy having attributes that control behavior of a management system in managing at least one network element of a communication network, said software object further comprising:

process list attribute having a plurality of management actions included therein, wherein said management actions are arranged in a user-defined manner that dictates a modifable process flow for said management policy to utilize in performing said management actions upon invocation of said management policy.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The software objectmedium of claim 20, further comprising at least one attribute that identifies a circumstance for which said management policy is to be invoked.

22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The software objectmedium of claim 21, wherein said circumstance includes identification of a particular type of fault condition for at least one network element.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The software objectmedium of claim 21, further comprising: name attribute specifying a user-defined name for said management policy, wherein said name attribute is not said at least one attribute that identifies said circumstance for which said management policy is to be invoked.

24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The ~~software object~~medium of claim 20, further comprising: behavior list attribute having at least one management action included therein to be performed responsive to an external event detected relating to said management policy.

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The ~~software object~~medium of claim 24, wherein said external event includes at least one external event selected from ~~the~~a group consisting of: a user attempting to manually clear an alert generated by said management policy, a user attempting to acknowledge an alert generated by said management policy, an a user attempting to change the severity of an alert generated by said management policy.